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Montserrat

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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I. General

1. Montserrat is a Non-Self-Governing Territory administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The basis of the current relationship between the Government of the United Kingdom and its Non-Self-Governing Territories is enshrined in the constitution of each Territory. The British Overseas Territories Act 2002 grants the right of British citizenship to "British Overseas Territory citizens".

2. The Territory is situated in the Leeward Islands in the eastern Caribbean, 43 kilometres south-west of Antigua and 64 kilometres north-west of Guadeloupe. The island of Montserrat is volcanic and very mountainous, covering an area of 103 square kilometres, with a rugged coastline. There are three mountain ranges: Silver Hills in the north, Centre Hills and the Soufrière Hills in the south. There are hot springs, ravines, black sand beaches and a white sand beach in the north. The vegetation is tropical.

3. In July 1995, the Soufrière Hills volcano, dormant for more than 400 years, erupted with devastating effects, causing the evacuation and relocation of about 70 per cent of the population from the southern part of the island to the north. The effects of that eruption and subsequent lighter volcanic activity are still being strongly felt. Montserrat's capital, Plymouth, was abandoned in 1997 after volcanic activity rendered it uninhabitable. A new urban centre is being developed at Little Bay in the north.

4. The population of the Territory, which reached a peak of 14,333 in 1946, fell after the devastating 1995 volcanic eruption. An estimated 8,000 people left the island, some of whom have returned. According to the administering Power, in 2010 the population of the island remained constant at approximately 4,886 (3,295 Montserratians and 1,591 non-Montserratians) compared to 10,639 in 1991 and 11,606 in 1980.[1]

5. The currency of Montserrat is the Eastern Caribbean dollar, which is aligned with the United States dollar at approximately EC$ 2.70 to US$ 1. Major trading partners are the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan and Trinidad and Tobago.

6. The Territory, locally known as Alliouagana, or "land of the prickly bush", was named after a Spanish monastery by Christopher Columbus in 1493. In 1632, the island became a British colony. Its first settlers were largely Irish. Slaves, who worked the cotton and sugar plantations, led unsuccessful uprisings in the late 1700s. Slavery was abolished in 1834. Meanwhile, after two brief occupations by France, British rule resumed in 1783 and Montserrat became a British Crown colony in 1871. From 1871 to 1958, Montserrat was administered as part of the Federal Colony of the Leeward Islands, and from 1958 to 1962, it formed part of the

Note: The information contained in the present working paper was derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Further details are contained in previous working papers posted on the United Nations website www.un.org/Depts/dpi/decolonization/docs.htm.

[1] Information provided by the administering Power on 14 January 2011.

Federation of the West Indies. Following the dissolution of the Federation in 1962, Montserrat elected to retain its status as a Crown colony.

II. Constitutional, political and legal issues

7. Under the Montserrat Constitution Order 1989, which came into force in 1990, Montserrat has a Governor appointed by the British Crown, an Executive Council and a Legislative Council.

8. The current Governor of Montserrat, Peter Waterworth, took office in July 2007 and, upon his retirement in April 2011, is expected to be succeeded by Adrian Derek Davis. The Governor has responsibility for internal security (including police), external affairs, defence, public service and offshore finance. Under the Constitution, the British Crown reserves the power, with the advice of the Privy Council, to make laws for the peace, order and good government of Montserrat.

9. The Executive Council comprises four Ministers, as well as the Attorney General and a Financial Secretary. It is presided over by the Governor and has responsibility for the general control and direction of government.

10. The Legislative Council consists of nine members. Elections are normally held in Montserrat every five years on the basis of universal adult suffrage. As previously reported, the most recent elections to the Council were held in September 2009, after which the Movement for Change and Prosperity formed a Government headed by Chief Minister Reuben T. Meade. The other parties that contested the election, the Montserrat Labour Party and the Montserrat Reformation Party, did not win any seats; the Montserrat Democratic Party could not find enough candidates to participate in the election. According to the administering Power, 3,516 voters were registered and 2,349 votes were cast, constituting a 66.8 per cent voter turnout. The next elections are due in 2014.

11. The law of Montserrat comprises English common law and locally enacted legislation. It is administered by a Magistrates Court and the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court. The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (Court of Appeal) is an itinerant court established under the West Indies Associated States Supreme Court Order No. 223 of 1967, whose sittings rotate among its nine member States, including Montserrat. Cases handled by the Supreme Court have recourse of final appeal to the Judicial Committee of the United Kingdom Privy Council. A Commercial Court, opened in 2009 in the British Virgin Islands, serves the Eastern Caribbean jurisdictions, including Montserrat.

12. Efforts to modernize the Territory's Constitution go back to 2002 when a Constitutional Review Commission was set up, which subsequently prepared a report that was debated in the Legislative Council in 2005. Talks between the territorial Government and the United Kingdom ensued and resulted in 2010 in the drafting of a constitution order for public consultation, which took place from May to September 2010.

13. In October 2010, the Legislative Council approved the draft constitution for consideration by the Privy Council, which in turn approved the draft the same month. At the same time, according to media reports, the Territory's Leader of the Opposition alleged that the new territorial Government had rushed constitutional changes through the Legislative Council without adequate public consultation.

According to the administering Power, on 20 October 2010 the new Constitution was laid before the United Kingdom Parliament and approved. The Government of Montserrat is working to update the relevant parts of its legislation so that the Constitution can come into force sometime in 2011.

14. The new Constitution, the text of which was made public in a variety of ways, including on the Internet, would enhance the relationship with the United Kingdom and spell out the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of Montserrat. Other modifications reflected in the new Constitution include the change of the post of Chief Minister to Premier and the establishment of a national advisory committee to advise the Governor on matters of defence, external affairs, internal security and the use of reserved powers. The Committee would consist of the Governor, the Premier, one other Minister, the Attorney General, the Financial Secretary and the Leader of the Opposition. A number of new provisions are aimed at improving the legislature and enhancing the chapters on human rights and public service standards.

III. Budget

15. The Montserrat public sector continues to be dependent on budgetary aid from the administering Power and other sources. According to the administering Power, the budget for the period from April 2010 to March 2011 showed a figure of EC$ 98 million in recurrent expenditure and EC$ 50 million for developmental purposes. During 2010, the territorial Government continued its privatization programme, for instance with the successful outsourcing of maintenance, security and cleaning services, with similar success expected to be achieved in other areas.

16. For the period 2008-2010, the United Kingdom Department for International Development made an allocation of 58 million pounds sterling available to Montserrat to strengthen disaster management capacity, security and safety at port and airport facilities, capacity for law enforcement and prison management, environmental protection, development of the private sector and the promotion of human rights.

17. Individual residents are taxed on their worldwide income from all sources. Tax is also levied on the chargeable income paid by any incorporated company, building society or body of persons. Companies pay a 30 per cent tax on profits. At the same time, there is no capital gains tax in Montserrat. In December 2009, the Governments of the United Kingdom and Montserrat signed a tax agreement to facilitate the exchange of tax information and to avoid double taxation on income. The Government of Montserrat subsequently signed similar agreements with the Governments of Belgium and the Netherlands.

IV. Economic conditions

A. General

18. According to the territorial Government's 2010 budget statement, despite the adverse global economic climate, economic activity in Montserrat was estimated to have expanded during the first nine months of 2009. Gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 1.2 per cent compared to 3.8 per cent in the first nine months of 2008. This performance reflected expansion in most sectors, including agriculture

(32.5 per cent), construction (9.8 per cent), government services, real estate and housing, mining and quarrying, electricity and water, and banks and insurance. Economic performance declines were recorded for hotels and restaurants (25.3 per cent), wholesale and retail trade (9.2 per cent), and transport, manufacturing and communications. Figures from the Statistics Department of Montserrat show that economic growth in the Territory reached approximately 4 per cent in 2009.

19. The economy of Montserrat continued to be dominated by public sector-led investments and projects. At the same time, according to the territorial Government, any sustainable development strategy had to involve the introduction of programmes that would significantly expand the private sector. Furthermore, the contribution of government services to GDP is expected to begin to fall over the period 2010-2014 as public sector reforms are implemented and private sector development initiatives begin to take root. The economy continues to have approximately 200 private business establishments. Just over 25 per cent of business is involved in the provision of financial, professional, personal and other household services.

20. During 2010, the promotion of population growth remained on the agenda of the territorial Government, as the territorial Government continued to review population, labour and immigration policies with a view to encouraging the development of private sector ventures.

B. Agriculture

21. As a result of the ongoing volcanic crisis, the majority of fertile agricultural lands, pasture and fishing areas are either restricted or inaccessible.

22. The Montserrat Ministry of Agriculture prepared a national food production strategy in 2009 as a framework to guide the development of a policy of food import substitution that guides Government investment in the agricultural sector for years to come. The strategy places emphasis on increased production in the following areas: arable crops, fishing, poultry and livestock. The territorial Government also took steps to introduce programmes to encourage the processing of local fruits and vegetables such as mangoes, guavas and breadfruit.

C. Financial services

23. Two commercial entities, the Bank of Montserrat and the Royal Bank of Canada, as well as several offshore banks, continue to operate in Montserrat, providing a range of banking facilities. According to the administering Power, there has been no activity for the past few years in regard to the incorporation of new banks.

24. Montserrat is a member of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, which is based in the neighbouring island of Saint Kitts and acts as central bank for Montserrat. Among other functions, the Bank monitors the commercial banks' reserves. Montserrat is part of the Eastern Caribbean Stock Exchange and the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, the body that monitors anti-money-laundering activities and the countering of financing for terrorism in the region.

D. Tourism

25. The redevelopment of the tourism industry continues to be a priority of the territorial Government. According to the territorial Government, as of November 2009, visitor arrivals to Montserrat were 14 per cent lower than the corresponding period for 2008. The recession experienced in the major tourist markets has also had a negative impact on Montserrat. Tourist arrivals decreased by 14 per cent, but excursionist arrivals increased by 6 per cent. The territorial Government's plans for a day-tour schedule, connecting the Territory's ferry service directly with cruise ships docking in Antigua, were expected to help push the excursionist sector upward for the benefit of taxis, tour guides and retail outlets in Montserrat.

26. Meanwhile, figures recently released by the territorial Government's Statistics Department showed very strong growth in tourism arrivals for the first half of 2010. During that period, a total of 4,863 visitors came to Montserrat (an increase of close to 22 per cent). This comprised 3,141 overnight visitors, 1,029 day-trip visitors and 693 cruise passengers.

27. In recent years, Montserrat has been trying to turn the active volcanic activity into an advantage, inter alia, by promoting tourism. The 1995 eruption of the Soufrière Hills Volcano created an accidental underwater nature park along 13 miles of coastline. As a result, sea life was given the chance to recover from human interference and the island became ideally suited to sustain dense and diverse marine life.

28. A ferry service between Antigua and Montserrat operated during the 2009 and 2010 winter seasons, the peak months for tourism arrivals. A new full-time ferry service jointly operated by the Governments of Montserrat and Antigua and Barbuda was operational during much of 2010. Scheduled and charter air services connect Montserrat with Antigua and Saint Martin.

E. Construction and housing

29. During 2009/10, construction activity increased by 9.8 per cent. The positive growth rate was fuelled by public sector construction associated with the territorial Government's reconstruction efforts. Private sector construction also increased, focusing mainly on residential and commercial buildings. The Ministry of Communication and Works allocation for 2010/11, approximately EC$ 13.2 million, was expected to play a major role in the overall infrastructure development programme of the Territory.

30. Two public sector projects, the housing development project in Lookout and the public market, a part of the Little Bay development project, were completed in 2010. According to the territorial Government, the Little Bay Town Centre provides the infrastructure to encourage further development in the area by the private sector. In order to open up more land for high-income housing and villa development, the territorial Government has allocated a further EC$ 4.5 million for infrastructure on the Davy Hill side and around Dogger Hill, behind the Territory's cultural centre.

31. Housing shortages persist for those who have lost their homes or have no access to evacuated properties in Plymouth and its environs. The territorial Government has established a programme to close volcano-related communal

shelters and temporary wooden family units by June 2011. In 2009, the construction and occupation of the Warden Supported Facility at Sweeney's, one apartment block at Lookout and three duplexes gave some 25 persons the opportunity to be rehoused in decent permanent accommodation. Further, the territorial Government decided to implement a EC$ 12 million accommodation project during 2010/11, while the "home ownership motivates everyone" programme, which was introduced in 2009, gained momentum.

F. Utilities and communication

32. The Montserrat Utilities Limited is responsible for the distribution of water and electricity throughout the inhabited portion of the Territory. The entire population has access to Montserrat's plentiful supply of good potable water and about 98 per cent of residents are linked up to the water system. The water section of the Montserrat Utilities Limited takes water from springs high in the mountains, lightly treats it and then stores and distributes it to customers through its network of pipes and reservoirs. It also has responsibility for sewage treatment in some areas, notably Lookout and Davy Hill.

33. The territorial Government continued to spearhead the development of a broadly supported national energy policy as electricity continued to be produced from inefficient containerized high-speed diesel generators. A power station project estimated to cost EC$ 21 million is being developed.

34. With regard to communications, in the context of efforts to liberalize the sector, the territorial Government has held meetings with Cable & Wireless, trading as Landline Internet Mobile Entertainment, and has had expressions of interest and proposals from other providers, including Digicel. According to the administering Power, it was understood that Digicel was ready to present proposals to provide mobile phone services to the island.

35. As previously reported, e-mail is widely used and digital subscriber lines have been introduced. A regular mail service between Montserrat and all countries is maintained. According to the territorial Government, Radio Montserrat and the Government Information Unit will be amalgamated in the Office of the Chief Minister into an autonomous agency, the Montserrat Media Corporation. The Montserrat Media Corporation is expected to spearhead the development of a virtual Montserrat programme to reach out to the Montserratians diaspora.

V. Social conditions

A. General

36. The volcanic crisis has had a profound effect on traditional social structures and support systems, with many families and communities split up and relocated to various parts of the world. Montserrat's social security programme was being reformed in order to achieve sustainability in the longer term. Anticipated changes included raising the retirement age, modifying the short- and long-term benefit accrual rates and restructuring the various benefits to reflect local circumstances.

This process continued in 2010, including through harmonization of relevant policies in the region.

37. According to the territorial Government, the estimated expenditure for statutory payments in 2009/10, including loan repayments, pensions, social security and tax refunds, was approximately EC$ 12 million. Policies and programmes for the poor and vulnerable would not be affected in a bid to rationalize public services as the Government was committed to preserving their dignity and place in society. For instance, social welfare financial assistance benefited approximately 270 households or some 310 individuals. Additionally, 94 households received rental assistance and 13 children received foster care allowances. The territorial Government's social welfare services continue to focus on the needs of the most vulnerable persons, including the elderly, the mentally challenged, the physically challenged, children and low-income households. Social welfare services in Montserrat include monthly financial assistance, rental assistance and one-time assistance for items such as food, school lunches, school supplies, utilities and essential household equipment, as well as burials. All social welfare assistance cases are "means-tested" to determine the individual's or household's financial situation and whether they qualify for assistance.

B. Labour

38. According to the administering Power, the working population of Montserrat stands at about 2,500, comprising approximately 50 per cent nationals. Montserrat maintains a positive industrial relations climate, within which every effort is made to ensure that workers, unions, employees and other stakeholders work together to achieve national development goals. Labour relations are governed by the Employment Act (revised 2002), under which the Labour Department provides mediation and conciliation services, with the Labour Tribunal settling disputes. The fifth annual Worker's Week was celebrated in Montserrat in 2010. It included workshops on occupational safety and radio discussions on investment opportunities for workers.

39. The territorial Government continued to address the shortage of skilled labour by providing relocation incentives to Montserratians and granting work permits to non-nationals. The granting of work permits is covered under the Immigration Act 2002. According to the administering Power, the territorial Government continued in 2010 to facilitate the active recruitment of skilled labour, both professional and otherwise, to meet demand.

C. Education and culture

40. The Montserrat Department of Education is responsible for the development and provision of educational and training programmes intended to enable its citizens to acquire skills that can contribute positively to the future of the Territory. Estimated expenditure on education was budgeted for 2010/11 at approximately EC$ 8 million.

41. Montserrat has educational infrastructure and services that provide full access to primary and secondary education. The Montserrat education system is broadly based on the British system. The Department of Education is structured into several

specialized organizational segments: early childhood education, primary education, secondary education, post-secondary education, special needs, teacher training and education support services. There are several Government day-care facilities and nursery schools, and one privately owned early childhood facility. According to the administering Power, two of the four primary schools are privately owned. The Government-owned Montserrat Secondary School is the only secondary school.

42. The Montserrat Community College in Salem offers sixth form programmes, nursing education and some technical skills courses. During 2010, the Community College continued to develop and strengthen its technical and vocational training programme. The University of the West Indies maintains an extramural department adjacent to the Community College. Postgraduate college students can read for a variety of long-distance degrees from the University.

43. According to the territorial Government, in 2010 Brades Primary School completed a new two-storey school building financed through the Basic Needs Trust Fund of the Caribbean Development Bank. Furthermore, the expansion work for the Lookout Primary School was in the planning process. The Ministry of Education received more than 1,000 primary school reading books from the Caribbean Centre of Excellence for Teacher Training of the University of the West Indies Institute of Education, located in Jamaica.

44. In November 2010, Montserrat held the second annual literary festival, the Alliouagana Festival of the Word, with the theme "Discovering new worlds through words", bringing together writers and readers from the Caribbean, North America, the United Kingdom and Australia.

D. Health

45. The Department of Health of Montserrat is responsible for providing primary and secondary health services, along with health-related policy advice to the territorial Government. Estimates put life expectancy in the Territory at approximately 73 years. Those suffering from asthma or other respiratory problems could be affected by airborne dust, volcanic ash and gases.

46. The estimated expenditure of the Department of Health was budgeted in 2010 at approximately EC$ 16 million to provide medical assistance on- and off-island for people in need, including foster children, covering areas such as general medical care, surgical care, diagnostic testing, eye and ear care, and medication. The territorial Government continued to offer free emergency dental services for school-age children, the elderly, pregnant women and Government staff. At the same time, the Territory continued to have difficulty in providing specialist health services mainly because of the significant cost involved. Nonetheless, the territorial Government was able to maintain a programme for a visiting ophthalmologist and a psychiatrist, and programmed a line-up of visiting specialists during 2010 in areas such as urology, gastroenterology, cardiology, obstetrics and gynaecology.

47. Montserrat has health facilities that include the 30-bed Glendon Hospital in St. Johns in the north, which is able to cover all routine health issues, X-rays and minor operations, as well as several primary care clinics. Anyone requiring specialist medical treatment may need to travel to a neighbouring island. Arrangements are in place for emergency medical evacuation to Antigua and

Guadeloupe. While there is no private dental practice on the island, public practice during the evenings and weekends is available to all.

E. Crime and public safety

48. In 2010, the territorial Government allocated approximately EC$ 9 million to fund the judiciary and internal security services (police, legal, magistracy, supreme court). Criminal offences are dealt with under the Penal Code of Montserrat, revised in 2002. Under the Parole of Prisoners Act 2004, a Parole Board reviews cases for the release of prisoners into the community on licence, and makes recommendations to the Governor in that regard.

49. With a budget allocation of approximately EC$ 6.8 million for 2010/11, the Royal Montserrat Police Force, comprising almost 80 officers, has a fully functioning police headquarters within the Government headquarters complex at Brades, as well as two substations and a marine unit. Under a five-year strategy, the Royal Montserrat Police Force places emphasis on neighbourhood and intelligence-led policing, crime reduction and prevention, and partnership in the criminal justice system.

50. According to the administering Power, concerns about the rise in youth crime and lack of discipline have remained constant in recent years and were addressed by the introduction of a territorial Government department for youth issues and the establishment of specific cross-departmental strategies. There was a decrease in crimes of acquisition in 2010, particularly burglary, showing that the efforts by the department for youth are meeting with some success. At the same time, the opportunity for forensic development was limited and dependent on expensive overseas analysis.

51. Following a bomb scare in March 2010, a committee comprising representatives from the Royal Montserrat Police Force, the Fire Department, the Human Resources Department, the Office of the Chief Minister and the Disaster Management Coordination Agency was established to look at the territorial Government's plans for evacuating and securing the headquarters in the event of a security emergency.

F. Human rights

52. Under the draft Constitution, provision is made regarding the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual. The following international human rights instruments were extended to Montserrat: the European Convention on Human Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. According to the administering Power, there is no discrimination on the basis of sex pursuant to articles 2 and 3 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

53. In 2008, the territorial Government signed the United Nations Children's Fund country programme action plan 2008-2011, which seeks to promote mutual

agreement and cooperation in the fulfilment of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In October 2010, delegates from Montserrat attended a workshop hosted by the Government of Anguilla and attended by other delegations. During the workshop, the participants looked at ways to accelerate the process of having the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women extended to their respective Territories. According to the administering Power, the territorial Government was also to consider the options available to meet international obligations on sexual orientation.

54. The Territory's Human Rights Committee, established by the Executive Council, helps fulfil the territorial Government's responsibilities in meeting the reporting requirements under various international conventions, monitors the implementation of the relevant conventions and advises the Government on matters related to human rights.

VI. Environment and volcanic activity

55. Following the 1995 eruption of the Soufrière Hills volcano after centuries of dormancy, in October 1996 the Territory was divided to create an exclusion zone comprising roughly the southern two thirds of the island. According to the administering Power, a large eruption in February 2010 was followed by a quiet period during the remainder of the year. The Montserrat Volcano Observatory website contains information on hazard levels and a map of the various zones.

56. In regard to other environmental issues during 2010, the Territory developed a biodiversity research protocol for the island; continued its long-term monitoring programme for flora, forest birds, reptiles and amphibians; began the development of a climate change adaptation strategy and a public education and outreach programme; and identified the distribution and extent of key invasive species to develop strategies for their management. Further, the Territory experienced damage from Hurricane Earl during the 2010 hurricane season: a number of bridges and culverts were washed away by flooding and landslides caused by 20 inches of rain falling over a 24-hour period.

57. For several years the Disaster Management Coordination Agency, funded in 2010/11 with EC$ 4.9 million, provided a comprehensive disaster preparedness and mitigation response and recovery programmes for Montserrat. In 2010, the territorial Government examined the Agency's structure and functions to make it a more streamlined, efficient and effective organization and to help integrate strategic disaster management objectives into regional development.

VII. Relations with international organizations and partners

58. Montserrat is an associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and its subsidiary bodies. The Territory receives some support from the United Nations Development Programme.

59. Montserrat is a founding member of both the Caribbean Community and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and a member of the institutions associated with those organizations, including the University of the West Indies, the

Caribbean Development Bank and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank. According to media reports, Montserrat, which is the only Non-Self-Governing Territory member of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, is still awaiting word from the administering Power as regards its participation in the Organization's economic union established in 2010.

60. As a Non-Self-Governing Territory of the United Kingdom, Montserrat is associated with the European Union but is not a part of it. According to information provided by the administering Power, Montserrat is considering joining the Caribbean Economic Partnership Agreement, which is a trade agreement negotiated between the Caribbean Community and the European Union.

VIII. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of the territorial Government

61. The position of the Government of Montserrat on constitutional reform is set out in section II above.

B. Position of the administering Power

62. Information on the general position of the United Kingdom was included in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism" (A/65/330, annex I). On 4 October 2010, the United Kingdom made a statement before the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) during the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

63. According to the record of the Fourth Committee meeting (A/C.4/65/SR.2), the representative of the United Kingdom reiterated the Government's established position that its relationship with its Overseas Territories was a modern one based on partnership, shared values and the right of each Territory to determine whether it wished to stay linked to the United Kingdom or not. Although the situation in each Territory was different and some Territories were at a more advanced stage of development than others, the United Kingdom would continue to work with all the Territories, as appropriate, in areas such as good governance, political and economic development and transparency, enhanced security and reduced vulnerability to natural and non-natural disasters.

64. The speaker went on to say that the relationship between an Overseas Territory and the United Kingdom was enshrined in the constitution of each Territory. A recent constitutional review process with a number of the Territories had resulted in updated provisions of existing constitutions, such as human rights provisions, and those relating to good governance and the respective roles of the Governor and locally elected politicians.

65. Further, good governance had been the central theme in all constitutional talks with the Territories. The Government of the United Kingdom had no wish to micromanage its Overseas Territories and was committed to allowing each Territory to run its own affairs to the greatest degree possible. However, that brought with it responsibilities on the part of each Territory. Where the United Kingdom felt that a

Territory was failing to fulfil the international obligations which extended to it or developments in a Territory gave rise to other concerns, the Government of the United Kingdom would not hesitate to raise it with the Territory's Government and to intervene where necessary.

C. Action taken by the General Assembly

66. On 10 December 2010, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolutions 65/115 A and B, based on the report of the Special Committee transmitted to the General Assembly (A/65/23) and its subsequent consideration by the Fourth Committee. Section VII of resolution 65/115 B concerns Montserrat. Under that section's operative paragraphs, the General Assembly:

1. *Welcomes* the progress made by the territorial Government and the administering Power on concluding the negotiations to reform the Constitution of the Territory and welcomes the public consultation being undertaken;

2. *Requests* the administering Power to assist the Territory by facilitating its work concerning public outreach efforts, consistent with Article 73 *b* of the Charter of the United Nations, and, in this regard, calls upon the relevant United Nations organizations to provide assistance to the Territory, if requested;

3. *Calls upon* the administering Power, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, as well as regional and other organizations, to continue to provide assistance to the Territory in alleviating the consequences of the volcanic eruption.